Reviewer’s report

Title: Gay and Bisexual Men’s Views on Reforming Blood Donation Policy in Canada: A Qualitative Study

Version: 0 Date: 16 May 2019

Reviewer: Jenny Kaldor

Reviewer's report:

* Thank you for the opportunity to review this well-written and timely piece of research on the Canadian perspective, as jurisdictions around the world take steps to review their blood donation policies.

* The paper would benefit from a clear Introduction (in addition to the existing "Background" section), structuring the paper and providing the reader with an overview.

* In particular, this Introduction should cover the rationale for the research: why did you conduct these interviews? Why is it important to understand GBM's perspectives on blood donation policy? Is it for policy reform objectives, or to motivate better compliance with the policy, or simply to fill in a picture of an understudied population? This would make clearer the link between participants' acceptance of the policy (your main focus), and the implications of that acceptance (compliance, ethical justification etc). While you briefly touch upon this at lines 196-200, it should be expanded and supported by the literature.

* The Results section should be condensed, and/or written in a more focused way. In particular, the section titled "Considerations for a 3-month deferral policy" (pp.20-29) should be significantly shortened: please use quotations to give an indicative sense of the data, rather than citing and paraphrasing the responses of several individuals: "one interviewee… Another argued… Another interviewee … The following man…" (pp.27-28).

* The Discussion section to a certain extent repeats the findings in the Results. I would have liked to see a more analytical discussion of the results - perhaps structured by the work of Kesby, which you cite at line 702. How - in what ways? - does your work build on Kesby's? It would have been useful to see this work mentioned up-front in the paper, and would also give the paper a stronger theoretical framework.

* Finally, please draw out more clearly the implications for policy. E.g., if GBM will continue to see CBS and Hema-Quebec as homophobic institutions (as per your Conclusion), can you make any policy suggestions to address this, based on your findings?

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

**Does the work include the necessary controls?**
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Unable to assess

**Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?**
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

**Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?**
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

Not relevant to this manuscript

**Quality of written English**
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

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